

SENATE RESOLUTION 33

By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Billy Block of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Billy Block; and

WHEREAS, born on August 10, 1955, William Donald “Billy” Block lived a life dedicated to music and, along the way, became a world-renowned voice for burgeoning artists and an unwavering supporter of the Americana musical genre; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Block spent his early years in Los Angeles, California, where he was the house drummer for Ronnie Mack’s Barndance at the legendary Palomino Club in North Hollywood and a disc jockey for KIEV radio; and

WHEREAS, he was a five-time recipient of the California Country Music Association’s Drummer of the Year award and was a tireless promoter of musical talent on his many shows, including *Western Beat Radio* on KIEV; the *Billy Block Show*, which he helmed in both Los Angeles and Nashville; *Western Beat with Billy Block*, which aired on CMT; and the *Billy Block Radio Show Live from Tootsies*, among numerous other events, music celebrations, and shows; and

WHEREAS, in his twenty-five years at the helm of the *Billy Block Show*, Mr. Block introduced countless young and unknown musical artists to his listeners, giving them a popular platform on which they could perform and, for many of them, launching their rises to fame, all while serving as the world’s foremost proponent for the Americana musical genre; and

WHEREAS, his passion for Americana music was so strong that he was known far and wide as the Godfather of Americana, and his ubiquitous presence in and around the city earned him the nickname “Mr. Nashville”; and

WHEREAS, a talented musician in his own right, Mr. Block played many of America's most hallowed and respected venues and toured with a number of musical luminaries, including Frank Black, Lucinda Williams, Patti Smith, Al Green, Jim Lauderdale, Buddy Miller, and the Bum Steers; and

WHEREAS, Billy Block was a devotee of Paramahansa Yoganonda and a lifelong follower of Jesus, and he will long be remembered by friends and loved ones for his quick, infectious smile, his sense of humor, his devotion to music and musicians, and the strength and generosity of his spirit, which led him to face his failing health with grace and inspirational indomitability; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Block was also deeply devoted to his family, and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Jill Rochlitz Block, and was the proud father of Rocky Hyatt Block, Grady William Block, Micheal Dontae Hughes, and Shandon Deundtay Mayes; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Block will be sorely missed by his siblings, Francine Beckman, Nancy Block, and Jay Block; and

WHEREAS, Billy Block leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Billy Block, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Block.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.